

EDINA PARK BOARD  
7:00 P.M. PARK TOUR  
8:00 P.M. PARK BOARD MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
AUGUST 11, 1999

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Finsness, George Klus, Chuck Mooty, Linda Presthus, Karla Sitek, Tom White, David Fredlund, Floyd Grabel, Bill Jenkins

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andrew Herring, John Murrin

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Vince Cockriel

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**I. PARK BOARD TOUR**

The Edina Park Board went on a tour of the following parks:

Todd Park, Garden Park, Walnut Ridge Park, Van Valkenburg Park, Lewis Park and Arden Park.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES**

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 8, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Bill Jenkins SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

**III. LEWIS PARK BANDY RINK/SOCCER FIELD**

Mr. Keprios stated that as his report indicated the architects study came in with a price tag a little higher than what was expected. He noted that it would cost \$150,000 and the soccer field would be out of play for an entire year. He pointed out that we could save \$20,000 to \$30,000 by seeding and not sodding. However, the right way would be to sod it and have it playable a lot sooner. Mr. Keprios commented this was a good recommendation from the Park Board to hire a professional who does this for a living and to show what the true costs would be to make it a quality playing field. Mr. Keprios stated that as Mr. MacHolda pointed out at the site the field is flat and will always be wet even though drain tile has been installed because it's a boggy area. It was noted that short of changing the grade and putting in the right drainage it will never be a quality playing field.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he was also asked to pursue other sources of financing that might be available to us. He noted that he received the study from the architect the same day he completed the staff report and therefore did not know what financing we would need. However, Mr. MacHolda has stated in the past that he feels the Soccer and Football Associations would be able to donate at least half of it. Mr. Jenkins asked how many fields would be gained out of this to which Mr. MacHolda replied one, but in essence it would be two because the field has lights.

Mr. Keprios stated that although it looks like half of the money would be from donations we would still be short the other half. Therefore, he asked what direction the Park Board would like to go. Mr. Klus asked what are the options because if we don't have the money there really is no reason to get donations when we can't finish it. Mr. Keprios replied that is why he made the recommendation he did, there are not many options. He stated that if the Park Board feels very strongly that we should no longer support bandy, the only thing gained would be better quality ice at another location(s).

Mr. Mooty asked Mr. Keprios if it would be possible to go forward with his proposal and try to monitor the fees that are generated by bandy and/or the users of that rink and compare that to the incremental cost. Then as we try to create some dollars and support for this next year we will have some greater justification of the economics of why we are trying to do this and the rationale for it. Mr. Mooty noted that if we could really try to analyze what the costs are this year it would be very helpful.

Mr. Klus asked if there are cost savings by not having bandy this year, where does that money go. Mr. Keprios replied that money wouldn't be saved, however, it would create better quality ice at other facilities as well as possibly extend the rink season. Ms. Presthus asked how much revenue does bandy take in. Mr. MacHolda replied that we charged them \$60.00 an hour in which they had approximately 45 hours last year.

Mr. Mooty asked if there is any way that the bandy rink could be monitored to see how much is for recreational purposes only. He noted that to him personally he doesn't see any reason to keep it open just for bandy. The question really is are people getting a lot more utilization out of the rink than what we think. Mr. Finsness asked if the smaller rink is still being flooded in which it was noted yes. Mr. Keprios commented that the reason the small rink is flooded is because the bandy rink is scheduled quite heavily and for someone who doesn't play hockey they need a rink to go to. Mr. Mooty asked how can it be scheduled that heavily when it's only being used approximately 45 hours. Mr. MacHolda replied that it is usually scheduled Monday through Thursday evenings starting at 6:00 p.m. until close. Therefore, there is some general skating before that time. On Saturday and Sundays bandy is scheduled from approximately 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Mr. Mooty asked how come we only have billable 40 some hours if that's the case. Mr. MacHolda replied that because of the weather this past year the season was very short and really was not a good season to compare it to.

Mr. Klus asked if bandy will be using the rink this winter. Mr. Keprios replied that as soon as Mr. Herring brought this issue to his attention he gave a heads up to the bandy teams that they may not have a facility this year. Mr. Klus asked when does the bandy organization need to know this to which Mr. Keprios replied it can be delayed right up until December when the ice is starting to be made.

Mr. White asked if we did have the financing to build the soccer field we wouldn't start until next spring, is that correct. Mr. Cockriel commented that if we had the financing we would start tomorrow. Mr. Klus asked for a better understanding of what we would gain in our park system if we didn't have bandy, what would you like to see enhanced that we haven't had in past winters. Mr. Cockriel indicated that right now there are two sites, Strachauer and York Park, where crews are not able to spend a lot of time on them. Therefore, those two rinks could get a lot more attention and have better quality ice. Mr. Klus asked if those two rinks are scheduled to which Mr. MacHolda replied that Strachauer is a scheduled rink. Mr. Keprios added that the only rink in which he received complaints this past winter was Strachauer Park.

Ms. Sitek asked how many complaints will you get from Bandy people. Mr. Keprios replied that he has put the word out on what may be happening and he hasn't received one phone call. He noted that at least 90% of the bandy players are non-residents and commented that their numbers are going down.

Mr. Jenkins indicated that we obviously cannot do the soccer field right now because we don't have the funds. Therefore, the question is do we want to eliminate bandy this year or do we want to continue with it. Mr. Jenkins asked if we do continue with bandy is it too late to raise their rates. Mr. Keprios replied that his recommendation would be that since we don't have the money to build the soccer field at this time to keep bandy one more year and raise their fee and let them know that this will be their last year.

Mr. White indicated that it is his understanding that Roseville charges \$240.00 an hour and we charge \$60.00. Mr. MacHolda replied that the bandy players complain that \$60.00 is too high because we don't have a sweeper and we don't have lines right away. Mr. White noted that he thinks we should be charging at least \$120.00 an hour. Mr. Mooty asked if we do that are we going to lose the bandy players and end up maintaining a big sheet of ice with no one using it. Mr. MacHolda stated that the bandy players have nowhere else to go.

Mr. Grabiell commented that he doesn't feel this is really a money issue, it's an issue of whether we want to provide a program or not.

Mr. Klus indicated that his recommendation would be that we keep the sheet of ice for bandy this year and keep the program and leave it up to staff as to whether there should be a raise in the fee structure. Because we will not be starting the soccer fields at this time he sees no reason to take the bandy sheet of ice away because there are a lot of families in the community who use it. Mr. KLUS MOVED TO RECOMMEND THAT

WE KEEP THE BANDY RINK AS IT IS AND LET STAFF DECIDE IF THERE SHOULD BE AN INCREASE IN FEES.

Mr. White indicated that it was mentioned that some of the soccer games had to be canceled because the fields weren't playable and asked if that was in any way related to the bandy sheet of ice. Mr. MacHolda replied no. Mr. Keprios added that the twist to that is if we had a playable field where the bandy field is we could rest our fields and renovate them. That is part of the problem, so in a way it is related.

Linda Presthus SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Klus suggested that this topic again be brought up at the end of the bandy season so we can discuss whether or not we want to have bandy next year.

Mr. Mooty noted we should also try to get a sense from the people that if we had the ability to do another soccer field would that be supported. Also, we should start working with the Soccer and Football Associations and any other group that may have an interest in trying to get something there. Therefore, we will know what our potential is for raising dollars.

#### **IV. USE OF ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS OR RACIAL NAMES OR SYMBOLS POLICY**

Mr. Keprios pointed out that as his staff report indicates some of the major league names we have used for our Coach Pitch program have been offensive to some people. He noted that he also made a typo in his staff report and it should read the "Edina Human Relations Commission" and not the "Edina Human Rights Commission". Mr. Keprios explained the chairman of the Human Relations Commission called him and stated that this is a very serious issue in their mind and they would like for us to address this issue. He noted that his response was that as Director of the Edina Park and Recreation Department he will not allow any of the teams he has control over to use those few offensive major league names. However, the bigger issue is the athletic associations. Do we want to come up with a policy similar to what Minneapolis did where we can fall back on that states we will not use names and symbols that are offensive to certain races and religions and if they do then they will not be able to use our fields. Mr. Keprios pointed out that what it comes down to is do we want to come up with a policy. Mr. Mooty commented that he thinks Minneapolis has a good policy that is appropriate.

Mr. Klus stated that he feels this decision should be left up to the athletic associations and this should not be a Park Board policy. Mr. Finsness commented that he thinks it's so easy to just stay away from those few names that some people are offended by. Mr. Klus indicated that those few names grow every year, it gets old and he doesn't have a lot of empathy for the whole issue.

Mr. Grabiell asked what is the relationship between the Park Board and these groups. Mr. Keprios replied that we recognize certain athletic associations that are independently

incorporated in which we give them first priority access to our fields. These associations pay \$6.00 per participant to play on these fields and ice rinks. That is basically the extent of the relationship. Mr. White asked if we would tell these associations we don't care what names you adopt but if you adopt a name that might be considered offensive you are not going to be able to use our facilities. Mr. Keprios pointed out that in the 22 years he has been with the city there has been one incident in which the EGAA wanted to do pull tabs for a fundraiser and were told if they did they would no longer receive services from the city. Mr. Grabiell indicated that he agrees with Mr. Klus that the decision should be left up to the athletic associations. Mr. Keprios used as an example that if a football team were named the Washington Redskins and someone took offense to it and brought it before the Human Relations Commission they would pass that on to the Park Board. Mr. Grabiell commented that we would say we don't have a policy on that, it is the Human Relations Commissions job. Mr. White pointed out that they would then say we should have had a policy and the City of Edina ends up paying a lot of money. He stated that he doesn't think we should be adopting names that some people might find offensive and secondly there is potential liability to the City of Edina by using certain names. Therefore, this is something that should be adopted as an organization.

Chuck Mooty MOVED TO RECOMMEND THAT THE EDINA PARK BOARD  
ADOPT THE FOLLOWING POLICY:

“IT SHALL BE THE POLICY OF THE CITY OF EDINA THAT NO PROGRAM, EVENT OR ACTIVITY OFFERED BY THE EDINA PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT WILL USE ANY ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS OR RACIAL NAMES OR SYMBOLS WHICH MAY, IN THE OPINION OF THOSE GROUPS, CREATE OR PERPETUATE STEROTYPES WHICH DISTORT OR DEGRADE SUCH GROUPS. PROGRAMS WHOSE EXPRESS PURPOSE IS TO EXPLORE AND CELEBRATE THE POSITIVE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION OF SUCH GROUPS WILL BE EXEMPT FROM THE POLICY.”

Tom White SECONDED THE MOTION.

In Favor: Andrew Finsness, Chuck Mooty, Karla Sitek, Tom White, Bill Jenkins

Opposed: George Klus, David Fredlund, Floyd Grabiell

Abstained: Linda Presthus

Mr. Keprios asked if this motion is to be extended to the athletic associations. Mr. Mooty replied that the way the policy reads is that no program, event or activity offered by Park and Recreation. Therefore, it doesn't necessarily relate to all of the other organizations. Mr. Mooty indicated that he would just substitute Edina for Minneapolis. Mr. Fredlund commented that he misunderstood the motion and asked that his vote be changed.

Opposed: George Klus and Floyd Grabiell

Ms. Presthus indicated that maybe we could show the athletic associations what we have for a policy and suggest that they each make a policy of their own.

## **V. DONATIONS/MEMORIALS POLICY**

Mr. Keprios explained that he recently received a phone call from the Department of Natural Resources requesting that Edina donate a bench and put it at Heights Park with a large plaque next to it that memorializes Joe Alexander, former DNR commissioner. Mr. Keprios mentioned that he believes Mr. Alexander already has a state park named after him. He stated that he informed the DNR that the existing informal policy is that we typically don't put plaques on these smaller donations because it is starting to get out of control. However, he noted that he would bring this request before the Park Board for discussion.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that there is no written policy on this and commented that there isn't a month that goes by where someone doesn't call to donate something. He indicated that this is wonderful; unfortunately, as life goes down the road tragedy does occur and the first thing people want is to donate something to the parks. Suddenly we have little headstones all over and it starts to look like a cemetery.

Mr. Klus asked about the service clubs in the community who want to donate something to the park. Mr. Keprios replied that service clubs are a different issue in which he has allowed plaques to indicate donated by such and such club or organization.

Mr. Grabiel asked if someone makes a donation do they receive some kind of official looking document from the city that says thanks very much for your lovely donation. Mr. Keprios indicated that he typically sends a thank you letter for tax purposes.

Mr. White explained that the issue of memorials and naming parks after people has become somewhat of a contentious issue for the Park Board because every month we are being asked to name something after someone, etc. He noted that at one point the Park Board was talking about developing some sort of standard for naming items in the city.

Mr. Jenkins indicated that he thinks it would be hard to quantify how the policy would read because there is always going to be some little exception. Mr. Keprios pointed out that there are two very different issues here. Naming parks and facilities is a very separate issue from memorials and permanent plaques. Mr. Keprios commented that people have asked us to replace plaques that are 60 years old. Mr. Mooty asked if there would be a way of doing this temporarily, so that after a certain time period of giving someone credit it's done. Mr. Keprios commented that one of the things they talked about in the past is that every donation we get that is a certain dollar amount we give them recognition. This could be done on possibly the back page of the activities directory

or we could buy an ad for the Current Newspaper saying thank you for your contribution to the park system.

Mr. White asked is there a staff proposal on this issue. Mr. Keprios replied that he would like to wait to have this discussion until the next Park Board meeting when Mr. Herring is here because he has a strong interest in this issue. He indicated that he will come up with a well worded written policy for the next meeting to discuss. Mr. Keprios commented that naming different places after people is very political in nature where he is thinking more on the memorial side right now.

Mr. Grabiell asked why is this an issue. Mr. Keprios replied he doesn't like the idea of "in memory of" because he feels it's a turn-off and adversely affects the park user's experience. Secondly, what is the length of time that we are responsible to keep these plaques up. Mr. Cockriel explained that there was a bench with a plaque at Cornelia Park for the past 15 to 20 years which was falling apart. Therefore, they took the bench out and put in a new one. Now this person wants a new plaque with different wording. Mr. Cockriel explained that the memory has been long gone and the donation over with and yet they want a new plaque on our bench at the City's expense.

Mr. Mooty noted that he thinks we need to have a way of encouraging people to donate and there has to be some recognition, especially now when dollars are needed.

Bill Jenkins MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO CARRY THIS ISSUE OVER TO NEXT MONTH'S PARK BOARD MEETING. Dave Fredlund SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED.

## **VI. APPOINTMENT TO EDINA COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICES BOARD.**

Mr. Keprios expressed a big thank you to Linda Presthus for her willingness to serve on the Edina Community Education Services Board. He indicated that when Mrs. Presthus feels there is an issue that is big enough to warrant a discussion from the Park Board he will put it on the agenda. Mr. Keprios stated that George Klus will fill in when Ms. Presthus is unable to attend a meeting.

## **VII. OTHER**

A. Recreational Facilities - Mr. Keprios asked Mr. Mooty if he would bring the Park Board up to date on the meetings he has been attending regarding some new development in the community.

Mr. Mooty explained that as many of you know the Lewis Kunz site has been looked at for potentially having a lot of different activities. He stated that he was approached by an individual on the City Council asking what the community still feel they need. He indicated that the more he thought about it, the concept he felt made the most sense was to try to add a fieldhouse or gymnasium complex off one of the current structures, such as

the community center on the south side. Therefore, the concept would be to add three gyms onto that south side which would also then be a potential field house for track, football and indoor soccer. By doing this we would take advantage of the locker rooms and facilities that are already in place at that location.

Mr. Mooty explained that this is in conjunction with the fact that right now the school is having to deal with the whole football stadium issue because the seating is going to be condemned the end of this season. Therefore, the concept that is being toyed with is trying to find a way to enhance a lot of the area over at the community center. He noted that this is one element of the pie that goes in connection with the development of the Lewis Kunz site. Mr. Mooty indicated that one way in which they are potentially trying to fund a portion of the dollars for this is to see if the school can swap its current bus depot to be either sold or sold back to the city to create dollars for the school to do this. If this is done then the school district itself would get a new bus depot at the Kunz Lewis site.

Mr. Mooty stated that there are a lot of things that need to be done at the community center. The question is how can those dollars be raised. One idea is the dollars can be raised through the levies that can be produced or created from the Health and Safety for the seating of football stadium. However, that is really only a small portion of the dollars. Another portion of dollars could come from the school district selling some of their property and the last portion of dollars would come from a referendum and that is what the most recent meeting was about.

Mr. Jenkins asked what structure will actually be put on that Lewis Kunz site. Mr. Mooty replied they are looking at such things as a senior center, library and hopefully the bus depot. Mr. Mooty stated that the question is how do we get support for dollars. He noted that we need to take this to the voters and see if it is something that would be saleable to the community. Therefore, right now they are trying to get a better understanding of what the costs would be for a potential referendum.

Mr. Jenkins asked if the school district would be responsible for the gymnasiums. It was noted yes, the school district would be responsible for operating the gymnasiums. Ms. Sitek asked if the gymnasiums would be attached to which Mr. Mooty replied that yes, they would be physically attached.

Mr. MacHolda stated that was a great report and asked if the referendum would be for just those two sites because although three gyms would increase what we have it is still short of what we project we will need. Mr. Mooty commented that he has proposed that we include attaching one more gym on another school property. Mr. Jenkins asked why not build it there to which Mr. Mooty replied because of the size. Mr. Jenkins asked how many more gymnasiums do we need to which Mr. MacHolda replied that a study he did two years ago suggested that we would need a minimum of four gyms but could use as many as eight, which was based on current scheduling trends.



Mr. Keprios indicated that was a great report. He then pointed out that the School District has asked that the city run the referendum part of this and if it passes that the school district would operate and maintain the gymnasiums. Mr. Keprios stated that we also didn't finish everything that we had started out to do in the last referendum. Therefore, we might possibly be able to finish what we had started if there is a referendum. He noted that it currently looks like there is a lot of support for this. Mr. Keprios pointed out that Mr. Mooty has been working really hard behind the scenes and he applauds him for that and thanked him for all of his efforts.

B. Edinburgh Park - Mr. Keprios noted that he mentioned in his staff report the unfortunate incident that occurred at Edinburgh. Mr. White asked why Ann Kattreh signed the letter. Mr. Keprios explained that Ann manages the day to day operations at Edinburgh Park, however, Tom Shirley is her supervisor. Mr. Keprios indicated that he would like to applaud Ms. Kattreh and Mr. Shirley for being right there on the spot. He noted that the bottom line is that the incident was a result of human error. Staff has taken all necessary actions to assure that this incident will never happen again.

C. Wooddale Comfort Station - Mr. Keprios noted that a meeting has been set up for Monday with the Wooddale group. He stated that the architect is going to bring renderings of what the facility may look like based on the input from that neighborhood group. He stated that when one is chosen he will have the neighborhood group attend the Park Board meeting to listen to their input. After this the Park Board will either vote it up or down where it will then go on to the City Council.

D. Centennial Lakes - Mr. Grabiell commented that his office is at Centennial Lakes and noted that people are amazed to find out that Centennial Lakes is part of the city park system. He noted that it is such a wonderful place and the park department should really be commended for this. Mr. Keprios stated that he will be sure Mr. Shirley gets that message. Mr. Mooty asked if this is something that should be promoted by more signage or something to that effect. Mr. MacHolda commented that it's going to be on the cover for the 2000 activities Directory.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that the park isn't finished yet. The north and south ends will soon be developed, which will include more advertising and kiosks for Centennial Lakes Park and will complete the master plan.

E. Dogs at Bredesen - Mr. Keprios indicated that a resident has asked him to have an animal control officer drive his truck around the path at Bredesen Park three times a day to enforce the dog on leash laws and make sure people are cleaning up after their dogs. Mr. Keprios stated that Bredesen Park is one of our most heavily used parks. Mr. Keprios commented that they will be having a baggie dispenser station put in at Bredesen Park for people to clean up after their dogs. He noted that the animal control officer does go around to the parks as much as possible.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

George Klus MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:20 P.M. Bill Jenkins  
SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.